

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/670,800

Examiner

Robert J. Sandy

Applicant(s)

ITOIGAWA ET AL.

Art Unit

3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the application filed on 9/26/2003.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-20.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 26 September 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date 9/26/2003
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Robert J. Sandy
Primary Examiner
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DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-20 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the claims are allowed in view of the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest a buckle device additionally having the structural combination requiring a second detecting mechanism detecting a position of the latch, and outputting a second detection signal; and a judging mechanism connected to the first detecting mechanism and the second detecting mechanism, wherein on the basis of the first detection signal, the judging mechanism judges whether or not the tongue plate is inserted in the device main body, and on the basis of the second detection signal, the judging mechanism judges whether or not the latch is engaged with the tongue plate.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The buckle device by Young (U. S. Patent No. 5,871,063) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting a position of the latch, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting an inserted tongue.

The buckle device by Yamaguchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,381,815, cited by applicant) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting one of the ejector, latch member and lock member, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting an inserted tongue.

The buckle device by Corrion et al. (U. S. Patent No. 5,742,986, cited by applicant) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting a position of the latch mechanism, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting an inserted tongue.

The buckle device by Do (U. S. Patent No. 6,729,427) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting the locking state of the tongue, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the state of the latch position.

The buckle device by Blackburn et al. (U. S. Patent No. 5,944,135, cited by applicant), has only one detecting mechanism for detecting either the position of the latch or the ejector, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the position or state of the remaining latch, tongue, or ejector not detected by the one detecting mechanism.

The buckle device by Becker (U. S. Patent No. 6,205,629) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting a position of the latch mechanism, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting an inserted tongue.

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The buckle devices by Devereaux (U. S. Patent Nos. 6,357,091 and 6,474,435) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting a position of the ejector mechanism, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the position of either of the inserted tongue or latch.

The buckle device by Kanbe et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6,742,229) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting the insertion of the tongue, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the state of the latch position

The buckle device by Engler (U. S. Patent No. 6,082,481) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting a position of the ejector mechanism, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the position of the latch member.

The buckle device by Engler (U. S. Patent No. 6,082,481) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting a position of the latch mechanism, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the insertion of the tongue.

The buckle device by Kopetzky et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6,076,239) has only one detecting mechanism for indirectly detecting a position latch via detecting the position of the securing element, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the insertin of the tongue.

The buckle device by Husby et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6,079,744) has only one detecting mechanism for detecting a position or state of the latch mechanism, but fails to have another detecting mechanism for detecting the insertion of the tongue.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert J. Sandy whose telephone number is 703-305-7413. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30-4:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J.J. Swann can be reached on 703-306-4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



**ROBERT J. SANDY
PRIMARY EXAMINER**